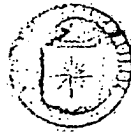


The Director
Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

APPROVED FOR
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11 NOV 1977

(b) (3)

Honorable James Abourezk
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Abourezk:

In response to your letter of 18 October requesting clarification of the subject of documents released by this Agency to the American Palestine Committee concerning the 1967 Israeli attack on the USS Liberty, I am enclosing the complete file of correspondence between the Agency and the Committee.

You state in your letter that assurances were given to the American Palestine Committee that CIA files contained nothing that would contradict the documents which were released to the Committee. The file of correspondence reveals no such assurances. In fact, the Committee was advised that the materials being released were sanitized and that other documents were not releasable. Furthermore, the reports released were clearly marked as being unevaluated information or in one case as being an intelligence memorandum compiled from all sources and therefore evaluated information.

For your information, I am forwarding the text of my comment to the press to which you make reference. It was made in response to a question on the ABC Good Morning America show on 19 September 1977. You will notice that I refrained comment on the action of the American Palestine Committee in its use of the documents released to it. Similarly, our press relations office has scrupulously avoided characterizing the action of the Committee. In response to press queries, two points have been noted; first, that the three documents printed by the Committee in the New York Times were unevaluated information, and secondly, that the intelligence memorandum which was also released to the Committee contained evaluated information drawn from all sources, and that information received subsequently did not alter the judgments contained in the intelligence memorandum.

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Any embarrassment or inconvenience that may have resulted from the Committee's publication of these documents is most regrettable. However, the interpretation placed upon these reports collectively by the American Palestine Committee was in no way dependent upon advice received from the Central Intelligence Agency.

I hope this is of assistance to you.


Yours sincerely,

SIGNED

STANSFIELD TURNER

Enclosures

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Excerpt from ABC Good Morning America Show

19 September 1977

BELL: There's another particular incident that has just come into the papers this morning, namely, that a group of Palestinian supporters in the U.S. has taken out ads in the New York Times which use raw CIA data gained from the Freedom of Information Act. The accusation is made that Moshe Dayan specifically ordered the attack on the USS Liberty in the 1967 Middle East war.

Can you give us any enlightenment on that?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I certainly can, and I'm glad, Steve, that you emphasized the word "raw" intelligence data.

We are required, under the Freedom of Information Act, to produce to those who ask for it intelligence documents which can be unclassified. In those which we released, there were several which indicated a possibility that the Israeli government knew about the USS Liberty before the attack. Also, we released an evaluated overall document which said very clearly that it was our considered opinion that the Israeli government had no such knowledge at that time.